

Message Text

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S E C R E T STATE 067612

NODIS

FOLLOWING REPEAT BONN 04477 SENT ACTION SECSTATE 13 MAR 78

QUOTE S E C R E T BONN 04477

NODIS

PLEASE REPEAT TO USNATO, LONDON, PARIS, AND GENEVA
(USSALTTWO)

E.O. 11652: XGDS-1

TAGS: PARM MNUC NATO GW

SUBJECT: ERW: FURTHER ALLIANCE CONSULTATIONS

REFS: (A) BONN 4476 ; (B) BONN 4434; (C) STATE 61674;
(D) BONN 3785; (E) USNATO 2125

BEGIN SUMMARY. FONOFF POLITICAL DIRECTOR BLECH EXPECTS
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THAT THE FRG WILL BE REQUIRED TO DISCUSS A POSSIBLE
LINKAGE OF ERW TO TANK REDUCTIONS AS ONE ARMS CONTROL
OPTION AT THE MARCH 20 NAC CONSULTATIONS ON ERW. WHILE
UNABLE TO ANTICIPATE THE OUTCOME OF THE MARCH 14
FEDERAL SECURITY COUNCIL (FSC) DISCUSSION, BLECH TOLD
THE CHARGE HE DOUBTED THAT THE FSC WOULD AGREE TO
ACCEPT THE SS-20 AS THE SOLE OPTION. HE REITERATED THAT
THE FRG SUPPORTED REACHING A DECISION ON ERW AS SOON AS
POSSIBLE, BUT THE POSSIBLE NEED FOR FULLER DISCUSSIONS ON
THE ARMS CONTROL ISSUE PRECLUDED AGREEMENT NOW ON
TIMING OF THE FINAL NAC SESSION.

BLECH ALSO EXPRESSED THE HOPE THAT THERE WAS NO MIS-UNDERSTANDING OF THE FRG POSITION OR OF THE EXTENT TO WHICH THAT POSITION COULD BE COMMUNICATED TO THE OTHER ALLIES. WHILE FULLY SUPPORTING OUR EFFORTS TO REACH AN EARLY DECISION AND OUR CONCEPT OF A THREE-PART PACKAGE, THE FRG AS YET HAD NO FINAL POSITION ON EITHER THE ARMS CONTROL ISSUE OR ON HANDLING THE THIRD-STAGE ANNOUNCEMENT OF AN ALLIANCE POSITION ON EVENTUAL DEPLOYMENT. IN ADDITION, BILATERAL EFFORTS WITH OTHER ALLIES WOULD BE DIFFICULT UNTIL THE FSC HAD LIFTED ITS HOLD ON COMMUNICATING THE BASIC FRG POSITION TO ANYONE OTHER THAN THE USG. BLECH STRESSED THAT THERE WAS NO CHANGE IN THAT POSITION, WHICH VAN WELL HAD GIVEN TO AARON ON JANUARY 30. END SUMMARY.

1. DURING THE CHARGE'S MEETING ON MARCH 11 WITH BLECH AND RUTH TO PRESENT THE PROPOSED US INTERPRETATIVE STATEMENT ON NON-CIRCUMVENTION IN SALT AND TO DISCUSS THE TIMETABLE FOR FURTHER ERW CONSULTATIONS (SEPTELS), BLECH MADE SOME PRELIMINARY COMMENTS ON THE US PAPER ON ERW/SS-20 LINKAGE WHICH THE POLITICAL SECRET

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COUNSELOR HAD GIVEN RUTH THE PREVIOUS AFTERNOON (REF B). HE ALSO QUESTIONED -- AS HAD RUTH -- THE REFERENCE IN THE US PRESENTATION TO AN ANNOUNCEMENT OF FRG SUPPORT FOR THE US THREE-PART APPROACH TO ERW.

2. WITH REGARD TO ARMS CONTROL LINKAGE, BLECH THOUGHT IT WOULD BE NECESSARY TO DISCUSS THIS DURING THE MARCH 20 NAC CONSULTATIONS. HE FELT REASONABLY CERTAIN THAT THE FRG WOULD HAVE TO RAISE THE POSSIBILITY OF A LINKAGE TO TANK REDUCTIONS AS AN OPTION -- THOUGH NOT NECESSARILY AS THE ONLY OPTION.

3. IF AGREEMENT WERE TO BE REACHED TO LINK ERW TO THE SS-20, BLECH CONTINUED, IT WOULD HAVE TO BE MADE CLEAR THAT WARSAW PACT TANKS REMAINED A TREMENDOUS PROBLEM FOR THE ALLIANCE AND THAT WE WERE NOT LOOKING AT THAT PROBLEM WITH LESS CONCERN. RUTH ADDED THAT WE SHOULD AVOID A SITUATION IN WHICH THE SOVIETS REJECTED AN SS-20 TRADE-OFF AND WE WERE THUS LEFT WITH NO CHOICE BUT TO DEPLOY THE ERW BECAUSE OF THE TANK THREAT, WITH NO FURTHER ROOM FOR MANEUVER TO TRY TO LESSEN THAT THREAT.

4. BLECH NOTED THAT, FROM BOTH A MILITARY AND A PSYCHOLOGICAL VIEWPOINT, THE TANK OPTION WOULD SEEM TO BE THE LOGICAL ONE. YET LOOKING AHEAD TO THE UN SSOD, IT MIGHT BE ARGUED THAT THE BETTER PSYCHOLOGICAL TARGET WAS THE SS-20. THE SOVIETS WERE DESCRIBING THE ERW AS AN "INHUMAN" WEAPON, AND WE WOULD BE ASKING THAT THEY FOREGO

DEPLOYMENT OF A WEAPON 200 TIMES AS EFFECTIVE.

5. BLECH THEN SUGGESTED THE POSSIBILITY OF

AN ARMS CONTROL PROPOSAL WHICH WOULD OFFER TO TRADE
ERW FOR SS-20 OR, IF THAT WERE REJECTED, FOR TANKS.
(THIS WOULD SEEM IN EFFECT TO BE A FOURTH OPTION, IN
ADDITION TO THE THREE RUTH HAD MENTIONED ON MARCH 10 --
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REF B.) HE POINTED OUT, HOWEVER, THAT ALL SUCH
DISCUSSIONS STILL REFLECTED WORKING LEVEL VIEWS WITHIN
THE FRG. HE COULD NOT ANTICIPATE WHAT WOULD COME OUT
OF THE MARCH 14 FEDERAL SECURITY COUNCIL (FSC) MEETING.

6. IT WAS IN PART BECAUSE OF THIS UNCERTAINTY THAT
BLECH WAS UNABLE TO PREDICT WHETHER THE FRG WOULD BE
ABLE TO AGREE TO A SECOND, FINAL NAC CONSULTATION ON
MARCH 23 (REF A). IF THE FSC DID INSTRUCT THE FRG TO
PROPOSE A TANK OPTION, IT WAS QUESTIONABLE WHETHER
AGREEMENT ON THE ARMS CONTROL TRADE-OFF COULD BE REACHED
IN SUCH A SHORT TIME FRAME. IT WOULD BE NECESSARY, FOR
EXAMPLE, TO DECIDE WHAT WOULD BE AN APPROPRIATE
BARGAINING POSITION -- HOW MANY TANKS AND FROM WHERE.

7. BLECH STRESSED THAT FOREIGN MINISTER GENSCHER'S
POSITION WAS QUITE CLEAR -- THAT HE DID NOT WISH THE
ISSUE TO BE DRAGGED OUT. THERE WAS ALSO FULL AGREEMENT
THAT THE NATO SUMMIT SHOULD NOT BE A NEUTRON SUMMIT, NOR
SHOULD THE SSOD BE DEVOTED TO THAT ISSUE. NEVERTHELESS,
THE FSC WAS A POLITICAL BODY AND THE OUTCOME OF THE
MARCH 14 SESSION COULD NOT BE PREDICTED. HE OBSERVED
THAT, AS THE US ALSO HAD POINTED OUT, THE SOVIETS THUS
FAR HAD BEEN TREATING ERW AS A POLITICAL ISSUE RATHER
THAN A HARDWARE ISSUE.

8. BLECH THEN REFERRED TO THE STATEMENT WE HAD MADE THE
PREVIOUS DAY, IN READING FROM PARAGRAPH TWO OF REF (C),
CONCERNING AMBASSADOR PAULS' "ANNOUNCING FRG SUPPORT"
FOR THE US THREE-PART APPROACH ON FEBRUARY 28. HE
WONDERED WHETHER THAT STATEMENT, COUPLED WITH OUR
SUGGESTION THAT THE FRG MIGHT WORK BILATERALLY WITH
OTHER ALLIES (PARA 3, REF C), DID NOT INDICATE SOME
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CONFUSION AS TO THE FRG POSITION. IT WAS IMPORTANT TO
AVOID ANY MISUNDERSTANDING ON THIS SCORE, AND HE
THEREFORE THOUGHT IT ADVISABLE TO REITERATE THE FRG
POSITION.

9. BLECH SAID THAT WHAT STATE SECRETARY VAN WELL HAD TOLD MR. AARON ON JANUARY 30 HAD BEEN A POSITION ADOPTED BY THE FSC, AND WHAT HE (BLECH) HAD TOLD AARON AND VEST IN WASHINGTON HAD BEEN ON INSTRUCTIONS FROM GENSCHER. BUT THE FSC HAD EMPOWERED THE FOREIGN OFFICE TO CONVEY ITS POSITION ONLY TO THE USG AND NOT TO ANY OTHER ALLY. HE HOPED IT WOULD BE POSSIBLE TO OBTAIN A "DEBLOCKAGE" WHEN THE FSC MET ON MARCH 14. MEANWHILE, ALL PAULS HAD BEEN INSTRUCTED TO SAY "PUBLICLY" (I.E., IN THE NAC) WAS THAT THE FRG WELCOMED NATO CONSULTATIONS WITH A VIEW TO REACHING A QUICK DECISION AND LOOKED FAVORABLY ON THE IDEA OF A THREE-PART PACKAGE APPROACH. THERE WAS NO QUESTION ABOUT THE FIRST PART OF THE US PACKAGE -- THAT THE PRODUCTION DECISION WAS UP TO THE USG. BUT THE FRG STILL HAD TO RESERVE ITS POSITION ON STEPS TWO AND THREE. THE LATTER -- HOW TO HANDLE AN ANNOUNCEMENT OF THE ALLIANCE POSITION ON DEPLOYMENT -- REMAINED AN OPEN QUESTION; THE FRG HAD NOT RESOLVED THE PROBLEM OF HOW TO MAKE ITS BASIC POSITION UNDERSTANDABLE TO THE GERMAN PUBLIC. (IN THIS CONNECTION, BLECH EXPRESSED CONSIDERABLE INTEREST IN WHAT WE HAD IN MIND IN THE WAY OF "NATIONAL STATEMENTS" -- PARA 6, REF C.)

10. THE CHARGE STATED THAT WE HAD SENSED THE POSSIBILITY OF A MISUNDERSTANDING AS A RESULT OF PAULS' STATEMENTS AT THE FEBRUARY 28 PRIVATE MEETING. HE HAD NOT SOUGHT CLARIFICATION IN BONN, HOWEVER, BECAUSE BLECH WAS EN ROUTE TO WASHINGTON AND WE ASSUMED THAT ANY CONFUSION WOULD BE CLARIFIED THERE. BLECH RESPONDED THAT HE HAD NOT GONE INTO THESE DETAILS IN WASHINGTON BECAUSE HE HAD NOT BEEN AWARE THAT THE USG HAD THE PERCEPTION OF THE SECRET

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GERMAN POSITION THAT WAS REFLECTED IN REF (C). HE NOTED THAT WHAT THE FRG HAD SAID IN NATO HAD TO BE SEEN IN THE LIGHT OF THE DISCUSSIONS DURING THE TWO OR THREE DAYS BEFORE THE FEBRUARY 24 NAC, WHEN THE FRG HAD POINTED OUT THAT IT WOULD BE UNABLE TO EXPRESS FIRM SUPPORT FOR THE US PROPOSAL UNTIL IT HAD BEEN CONSIDERED BY THE FSC. IN WASHINGTON, HE CONTINUED, HE HAD REAFFIRMED THE BASIC FRG POSITION BUT HAD NOT GONE INTO DETAILS, THOUGH HE COULD SEE NOW THAT WHAT HE SAID IN WASHINGTON COULD HAVE BEEN INTERPRETED AS RECONFIRMING PAULS' REMARKS.

11. BLECH URGED THAT THERE BE NO MISAPPREHENSION THAT THE FRG WAS BACKING AWAY FROM ITS BASIC POSITION AS EXPLAINED ON JANUARY 30. IT WAS SIMPLY A MATTER OF BEING UNABLE TO GO BEYOND THAT POSITION, AS HE HAD EXPLAINED PREVIOUSLY, UNTIL THE FSC HAD ONCE AGAIN CONSIDERED THE MATTER. AND BECAUSE OF THE HOLD ON CONVEYING THE GERMAN POSITION TO THE OTHER ALLIES, IT WOULD NOT YET BE POSSIBLE TO WORK BILATERALLY WITH THE OTHERS AS THE US

HAD SUGGESTED.

12. BLECH THEN ACKNOWLEDGED THAT THE FRG HAD IN FACT UNDERTAKEN SOME BILATERAL EFFORTS BUT IMPLIED THAT IN SO DOING GENSCHER HAD STUCK HIS NECK OUT BY GOING BEYOND THE FSC MANDATE. THERE HAD BEEN SOME DISCUSSIONS WITH THE FRENCH AND THE BRITISH, AND ALSO GENSCHER HAD HAD CONVERSATIONS WITH DUTCH FONMIN VAN DER KLAUW. ON A VERY CONFIDENTIAL BASIS, HE ADDED THAT THERE HAD BEEN POLITICAL CONTACTS VIA THE CDU WITH THE BELGIANS. BUT CONTACTS WITH THE DUTCH AND THE BELGIANS HAD BEEN ON A PARTY BASIS, WHERE GENSCHER HAD SOME FLEXIBILITY; WORKING BILATERALLY ON OTHER ALLIES AT AN OFFICIAL LEVEL WOULD BE A DIFFERENT MATTER AND WOULD BE DIFFICULT UNDER
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PRESENT CIRCUMSTANCES. AGAIN, BLECH EXPRESSED THE HOPE THAT THIS WAS FULLY UNDERSTOOD IN WASHINGTON. THERE WAS NO QUESTION OF BACKING AWAY FROM THE BASIC FRG POSITION AS EXPLAINED BY VAN WELL; INDEED, THE GERMANS HAD ALREADY GONE SOMEWHAT BEYOND WHAT THEY HAD BEEN AUTHORIZED BY THE FSC TO DO.
MEEHAM

UNQUOTE VANCE

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